



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

IV. AN INTERVIEW WITH JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

The attempt to contribute, however slightly, to the vast volume of writings on Rousseau is a venture which, all will agree, should be undertaken with diffidence. The character, achievements, and influence of the Great Romanticist have been studied, discussed and debated by so many eminent scholars, that, unless one has something new to offer, the careful critic will consider any attempt to reopen the complex subject as tedious as it is presumptuous. In the present instance, however, the writer feels that he has been fortunate enough to discover some material which, though of modest scope, will nevertheless prove of real interest to lovers of Rousseauiana.

In his *Selbstbiographie*,¹ (of which a copy is to be found in the Harvard library), the minor poet Christian Felix Weisse gives an account of his meeting with Rousseau at Montmorency. Weisse, who was a graduate of the University of Leipzig, occupied at that time the position of *Hofmeister* to Count von Geyerberg, and in company with his patron had made the trip to Paris in the fall of 1759. They arrived there, to be precise, on November 21 of that year. In the following spring Weisse together with a mutual friend, the protestant minister Payon, went out to Montmorency, where Rousseau was then living, in the hope of seeing the world famed recluse. The record of the interview which the two lion hunters were lucky enough to obtain, is presented in the following paragraphs.² I translate the German, but leave intact the French, which naturally is of more especial interest. Indeed, the spelling of the latter is often at variance with French usage, although which is at fault, Weisse or his printers, it would be hard to say.

During his stay in Paris, Weisse became personally acquainted with D'Alembert, Père Barre, Nollet, Count Caylus,

¹ Published by Georg Voss: Leipzig, 1806.

² *Selbstbiographie*: pp. 70 (line 11)-75 (line 2).

Abbé Arnaud, and others. The greatest pleasure, however, was given him by the acquaintance with the celebrated Jean Jacques Rousseau, with whom he was fortunate enough to spend a few hours in Montmorency, during which time he (Rousseau) showed himself in his most characteristic vein. As a matter of fact, Weisse could consider himself fortunate in getting the chance to speak to him, inasmuch as many attempted unavailingly to make his acquaintance, and inasmuch as he avoided friends and Parisians in proportion as they sought his society. At the very moment when Weisse and M. Payon, whom Rousseau already knew, appeared at the Pavillion (where Rousseau was living), a number of carriages filled with officers, *abbés*, and ladies drove up from Paris. He (Rousseau) said to them, with his cane in his hand, 'that they could see that he was on the point of going out for a walk; that he must even excuse himself to these foreigners who came from Germany (he pointed at us). In the meantime, as the carriages were driving away, he invited us *sotto voce* to meet him at noon in the garden of Montmorency. He appeared, indeed, at the appointed hour and was very affable.

When Weisse expressed wonder at the beauty of the surroundings, and congratulated him upon the locality, he said:

"Et pourtant elle ne me convient pas. Mon goût est si blasé, que j'aimerois mieux être dans un désert."

Weisse thereupon gave him Mendelssohn's translation of his essay: *sur l'inégalité des hommes*, and the *Phaedon* of this philosopher. He (Weisse) had to tell him everything that he knew about this excellent man (Mendelssohn), upon which Rousseau said: "He wanted to have Mendelssohn's observations translated, so that he might read them, because they came from a Jew; for otherwise there was not a book in the world he would read."

Rousseau seemed to be no great admirer of the King of Prussia. He reviled the French poets who celebrated him, inveighed against fame and conquerors, and expressed

himself about Frederick in the harshest terms. At this opportunity he began to declaim against the general depravity and *méchanceté* of men, who went so far that they were "méchants pour le seul plaisir d'être méchants." Weisse and his friend maintained rather the contrary, and said that when they were '*méchants*,' they were generally so in the interest of some passion. He refuted us with his dog, who accompanied him, and who was so fat he could hardly walk:

"Regardez ce pauvre chien, à peine peut-il se trainer; c'est que les polissons de Paris l'on chartré. Est-ce par passion ou par méchanceté qu'ils ont exercé cette barbarie?"

It happened that during this conversation they were walking around a large basin upon which there were swans; one of them sailed up to the shore and hissed at his dog. Rousseau raised his stick and ran along the edge of the basin to punish the swan; he remained finally standing with outstretched arm and said:

"You see, evil has even penetrated animals; what had the poor dog done to those swans?"

Of his *Dévin du Village* that Weisse had seen a couple of days before at the theatre, he said

"C'est une bagatelle; je ne l'ai faite que pour voir quelles bêtes sont ces François-là, pour pouvoir goûter une telle misère."

He asked Weisse what news he had heard in Paris, and the latter answered: "The most interesting so far as he was concerned had been that people were expecting a new book from him (Rousseau). It was the *Nouvelle Héloïse*. Rousseau showed them some proofs which he had received that very morning from Holland, and asked Weisse 'what people in Paris thought the novel would be? Weisse answered, as he had heard: "Que c'étoit une satire contre les femmes."

"Ce ne sont," he answered, "que des bons conseils, mais elles ne les suivrons pas."

He accompanied them into the church of Montmorency where they saw the "*Grabmaeler*" of the Dukes. His remarks about each and all were tinged with Rousseauistic

"esprit," but Weisse has forgotten them. The ecclesiastics who were in the church came to meet him with much obsequiousness, which he returned with friendliness. M. Payon happened to mention the Gospels, and Rousseau spoke reverently of them.

"When I read them," he continued, I believe 'tout ce qu'elle débite, tant je suis touché de sa simplicité. As soon, however, as I reflect and consult my reason, I begin to doubt and find inconsistencies. 'Bienheureux celui qui n'y en trouve pas.' "

"He invited Weisse, at their leavetaking (after they had walked about with him for two, or three hours), to visit him once more before his departure, and write to him in advance as to the day of his visit, in order that he might not be away. He then accompanied them for a bit of the way beside their *cabriolet*, and finally disappeared in a foot-path that led into a park.

Of the authenticity of this interview there can be, it seems to me, little question. That Weisse should have deliberately invented it, for the purpose of magnifying his own importance is inconceivable. Indeed, the autobiography was actually not his work at all; it was pieced together, after his death, by his son and son-in-law,³ from notes, letters, and miscellanea found in their father's papers. The charge, therefore, that Weisse consciously posed as the acquaintance of famous men, with intent to dazzle the reader, must be dismissed. Corroborative evidence of Weisse's honesty is, furthermore, to be found in the account itself of the interview. Especially is this true of the sayings attributed therein to Rousseau. A careful investigation of them will make this yet clearer, for we shall find that each and every one bears the unmistakable stamp of the latter's singular genius.

Nothing could be more characteristic than the preliminary incident, with which the interview opens; as a matter of fact, we have right at the start a splendid illustration of the Rousseau formula in operation. Much has been written

³ Christian Ernst Weisse and Samuel Gottlob Frisch.

for and against the sincerity of the famous 'conversion' which the success of the first *Discours* appears to have inspired. Whether it was a bit of cool calculation, whether Rousseau's head was turned by his sudden celebrity,⁴ or whether, as Gerhard Gran would have it, the 'renunciation' was the result of a great psychological crisis,⁵ this much at least is certain: No moral conversion ever achieved a greater social success.⁶ As Weisse's account would corroborate, no *solitaire* ever lived who was more unmistakably the 'rage,' no hermit was ever the object of more fashionable curiosity than was Rousseau. Favor of this sort with the frivolous is obviously the reverse of complimentary to the recipient, for the interest of society is more apt to be stimulated by the novel than by the noble; eccentricity of gesture is more certain to sting the blasé taste of fashion than is rectitude of conduct.

That Rousseau was keenly aware of this, that he knew the secret of his success, and that he played his part with gusto is amusingly demonstrated by the little incident recorded by Weisse. For all his surface *naïveté*, the *Citoyen de Genève* was not without a certain kind of craft. Incapable of conventional wit or compliment, he had reconciled himself with much shrewdness to the only promising part left, the part of 'surlly virtue.' He found it remarkably congenial, for it combined easily and naturally the attractive elements of sincerity and paradox. It satisfied his plebeian pride, while at the same time it proved a striking contrast to the artificial monotony of contemporary social routine. He also found it a source of convenience in that it enabled him to refuse his society without giving undue offence. The application of the principle as here recorded by Weisse may be considered an eminently characteristic instance of the Rousseauistic shrewdness. Openly and brutally to prefer the unassuming gentlemen to the arrogant social idlers was of

⁴ C. H. Wright: *History of French Literature*, p. 520.

⁵ Gerhard Gram: *F. F. Rousseau, gjenmembrud og kampe*.

⁶ *Confessions*, ed. Hachette, VIII, 305, 306.

a 'bravura' which, in the eighteenth century, must have appeared especially piquant. It whetted public curiosity by setting up a new standard of exclusiveness, and it did it in such a manner that the excluded could not complain. All things considered, therefore, the little incident offers a fair sample of Rousseau's peculiar 'originality.' In the conventional sense Mme. D'Epinay's 'bear' may have been deficient in '*esprit*', but that he was not without a certain readiness is here amply demonstrated.

The first actual quotation that Weisse sets down in French, the profession of distaste for the Montmorency gardens, we must receive as a characteristic specimen of the Rousseauistic virtuosity. Uttered with malice aforethought, it was essentially a remark *à effet*, and from that angle only can it be considered sincere. That Rousseau's taste in landscape was really *blasé*, nobody today would believe. As the descriptive passages which abound in the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, the *Confessions*, and the *Rêveries* testify, his aesthetic feeling for nature was fresh and virgin. The fierce colors of the tropics, the barren stretches of the desert, or the gloom of the harsh northern coasts that can alone tingle the jaded senses of a Pierre Loti, would have been too strong stuff for the unspoiled Rousseau. Nowhere in his writing do we find any artistic treatment of the sea, or the desert of the dunes; indeed his silence here is more eloquent than words, and affords a striking contrast to the many and gorgeous pages of the later romanticists. If, therefore, we bear these facts in mind, especially the beautiful picture of the Montmorency gardens,⁷ the remark quoted by Weisse assumes a very narrow significance. That it contained any inherent truth is absurd. On the contrary, it is frankly an unblushing sophism, and is of interest only in so far as it shows to what extremes Rousseau was willing to push his paradoxes in order to live up to his reputation.

Love of rural scenery was not, it is well known, a fad of the eighteenth century society; the cult of 'nature' had, in

⁷ *Confessions*, ed. Hachette, VIII, 374.

1760, not yet become fashionable. To prefer the year 'round the woods of Montmorency to the *salons* of Paris was, therefore, distinctly paradoxical, and it is an established fact that this preference on Rousseau's part was looked upon by the social as one of the oddest traits of his character.⁸ In Weisse, however, he found a visitor of an unexpected caliber. Here was a man who actually liked what he himself liked, who, instead of considering Montmorency depressing, found it beautiful. The *rôle* of eccentricity was by no means so comfortable in this case, but Rousseau was equal to the emergency. The seeming inconsistency of his remark is obviously superficial; its real purport no thoughtful reader can mistake, for it offers indubitable evidence of Rousseau's readiness, when necessary, to sacrifice the genuine nature lover that was in him to the *poseur*.

As regards the passage dealing with Mendelssohn, little comment is necessary. It tallies perfectly with what we know of Rousseau's attitude toward the Jews. The conventional dislike for the persecuted sect found little favor in his eyes, for reasons emotional as well as intellectual, and in the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* he makes no attempt to disguise his sympathy for the victims of the popular prejudice.⁹ The point that concerns us, however, is that in the present instance, he has succeeded in combining with much deftness one paradox (his friendliness toward the Jews) with another (his hatred of books), in short a new enlightenment with a new obscurantism. To except, in his general condemnation of books, those written by a Jew because they were written by a Jew was, in the eighteenth century, a little masterpiece of inversion. Indeed a better example could with difficulty be found of one feature of Rousseau's peculiar genius, his amazing competence in the technique of the paradox.

Of Weisse's next statement, that Rousseau appeared to be no great admirer of Frederick of Prussia, we find corro-

⁸ *Confessions*, VIII, 286.

⁹ *Emile*, Book IV, ed. Hachette, II, 276.

boration in a passage from the *Confessions*. When about to take refuge at Motiers, in the Val de Travers, Rousseau admits that he hesitated. The little village was within the domains of the King of Prussia, and Rousseau felt, he says, a certain discomfort in the thought of casting himself upon the mercy of a monarch toward whom he had, in the past, been severe.¹⁰ The basis of this severity we may feel sure to have been emotional as well as intellectual. The spectacle of an eminent criminal gambling in human life and human folly could not have been pleasing to a believer in the innate goodness of man.¹¹ At the same time, creditable to Rousseau's heart and intellect as was such an estimate of Frederick, we should not forget that it possessed also the attractive element of paradox. It was distinctly unconventional in mid-eighteenth century to attack from the humanitarian standpoint the military and political hero of Europe. That Rousseau was aware of this, and that he knew its value is a reasonably safe assumption. To a German like Weisse such an attitude could not fail to seem little short of sacrilege, and in consequence, arouse that delighted awe which it is at once pleasant to occasion and to experience.

The passage dealing with the diatribe against the *méchanceté* of men, and the pursuit of the swan that had attacked his dog, is thoroughly consistent with what we know of Rousseau's mental condition at this period of his life. The disastrous consequences of his passion for Mme. d'Houdetot, the rupture with Mme. d'Epinay, and the *Philosophes* were still recent in his mind, as well as in the mind of the public.¹² It is easy to understand how, cherishing the mirage of the primitive goodness of man, Rousseau should have been harshly disillusioned by this experience, as well as by eighteenth century society in general, whose callous indifference to almost every form of virtue has become proverbial. The manner in which he reacted is amusingly depicted by the

¹⁰ *Confessions*: ed. Hachette, IX, 35.

¹¹ *Discours sur l'Origine de l'Inégalité*, ed. Hachette VI, 133.

¹² *Confessions*; ed. Hachette, VIII, 356-61.

passage from Weisse; we see Rousseau in the resultant, and for his day unorthodox, posture of fanatic. Even here, however, he contrives to assume a pose that is original as well as paradoxical. The novelty of Rousseau's fanaticism resides in a technicality rather than in a principle, for in spirit it bears a striking resemblance to the religious fanaticism of the past. This technicality is the ingenious substitution of 'virtue'¹³ for 'faith.' In other words, just as the religious enthusiasts of the Dark Ages had been intolerant in the matter of faith, so Rousseau is now intolerant in the matter of virtue. We have not yet exhausted, however, the subtleties of this distinction. The displacement of faith by virtue testifies to remarkable shrewdness, for by this simple trick, the domain of the fanatic's activities becomes greatly enlarged. Whereas faith had been applicable only to men, virtue could be extended to animals. Rousseau's pursuit of the swan for attacking his dog was an eminently characteristic gesture. The desire to inflict physical punishment which is the mainspring of fanaticism, was becoming every day more difficult of satisfaction in the eighteenth century. Thanks to the efforts of the *Intelligentsia*, led by Voltaire, religious persecution was going out of style. By shifting from faith to virtue, however, Rousseau made possible the gratification of the fanatic's passion, while at the same time conforming to the new ideas. If physical persecution of men was becoming *démodé*, the same was not true of animals. To punish one animal for molesting another was, in the eighteenth century, not merely permissible, it was actually extremely *piquant*. That Rousseau often indulged this paradoxical emotion, we know from the *Confessions*.¹⁴ He found it very attractive for it enabled him to gratify the instinctive cruelty that was in him as in every man, the while posing as a champion of the weak and oppressed. How typical of the Rousseauistic casuistry the whole inci-

¹³ *Confessions*, VIII, 355.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, VIII, 12.

dent is, need not be insisted upon. That Weisse was impressed by its unconventionality we may feel assured; that he fully appreciated the sophistry of which it was the outward expression, we may venture to doubt.

As regards the sentence that concludes the episode: "You see, evil has even penetrated animals," we have one of the most characteristic *sentences* of the entire interview. The ingenious explanation of the origine of evil by the fall from nature (rather than from God)¹⁵ Rousseau applies here to the animal kingdom, and would have us take it for granted that animals, like men, were born 'good,' but had subsequently yielded to the corrosive influences of civilization. It is a pity that Weisse or Payon did not ask him to explain the process of this interesting decadence, for the Great Obscurantist was never more entertaining than when dogmatizing upon data drawn from sentimental assumptions.

The disparaging terms in which Rousseau speaks of his operetta, the *Devin du Village* are akin to his professed distaste for the Montmorency gardens in that they should not be taken seriously. If there was one faculty upon which Rousseau prided himself as upon no other, it was his faculty for writing music. All his life he had labored over the mysteries of the art, but for the most part with indifferent success. His early efforts at composition were grotesque;¹⁶ his new scheme for musical was, despite its real ingenuity, found to be impractical;¹⁷ his score for the opera, the *Muses Galantes*, was deemed unsatisfactory.¹⁸ When therefore, he succeeded in completing, by dint of incredible effort, his *Devin du Village*, and getting the little intermezzo before the public, his self-sufficiency knew no bounds. As a composer, the operetta is his one real achievement, and in the *Confessions*, he does his utmost to magnify its importance.¹⁹ That he

¹⁵ *Discours per l'Origine de l'Inégalité*, ed. Hachette, I, 30.

¹⁶ *Confessions*, VIII, 104-5.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, VIII, 200, 201.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, VIII, 242.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, VIII, 269.

should dub it, as Weisse records, a *bagatelle*, which he had written only to expose the execrable taste of the stupid Parisians, need not surprise us. On the contrary, the remark is typical. In essence it amounts to praise of the operetta by inversion, a paradox illustrating very aptly the homage paid by pagan pride to christian humility. We should remember also, in this connection, that Rousseau's part in the quarrel over the relative merits of French *versus* Italian music, known as the *Guerre des Bouffons*, may have had something to do with the moroseness of the sentence quoted by Weisse. Rousseau, it is well known, entered the lists as a champion of Italian art, and in his truculent *Letter on French Music*, had attempted to prove that French music was a contradiction in terms. This theory (expounded with Rousseauistic consistency immediately following the success of the *Devin*) had grown to be a veritable hobby, and in consequence, it is entirely natural to find him, at this period, speaking contemptuously of French appreciation, even at the expense of his own work. Indeed, it is entirely probable that Rousseau condensed into this cynical appraisal of the *Devin du Village*, two independent emotions: pride in his achievement and contempt for French taste. The spontaneity with which this complicated paradox leaped forth is eloquent proof of Rousseau's mastery of his chosen part, the part of 'surly virtue.'

The passage touching on the *Nouvelle Héloïse* is significant (aside from its Rousseauistic flavor) in that it substantiates in a measure the authenticity of the interview. Rousseau, says Weisse, showed them some of the proof which had arrived that very morning from Holland. Now Rousseau himself states in the *Confessions* that he gave the M. S. of his novel to the publisher Marc-Michel Rey of Amsterdam,²⁰ who printed it in 1760, although it was not issued until 1761, at about the same time that the Paris publisher Duchesne got out his edition. It is wholly possible, therefore, that the proofs of the first volumes, at least, might

²⁰ *Confessions*, VIII, 360.

have been struck off as early as March 1760; indeed Weisse's statement that he saw them would seem to justify such an assumption. That both the *Confessions* and Weisse's account should agree upon the time of the printing of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* must be viewed as something more than a mere coincidence.

As for Weisse's remark that Paris expected the forthcoming novel to be a satire on women, we are given here a glimpse of the popular attitude toward Rousseau at this stage of his singular career. His bitterness, his unsociability, and especially the *débauche* of his courtship of Mme. d'Houdetot were so well known, that when it was rumored that he was at work on a novel, the supposition that it would be little favorable to women seemed logical. However amusing this supposition may appear to us who have read the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, the statement of its contents as summed up here by Rousseau, is even more diverting. The modern reader, at least, could find little in the first part that he would consider *de bons conseils*. The originality of Rousseau's novel consists, as a matter of fact, in the voluptuous mingling of the spirit and the flesh on the one hand, and in the sincere idealization of duty and renunciation on the other. To the eighteenth century reader, accustomed to cold intellect or cynical license, both parts of the novel must have appeared startlingly paradoxical. From the eighteenth century point of view, therefore, Rousseau is somewhat justified in calling his work an epitome of *bons conseils* which women will not follow. It might be pointed out, however, that these words apply only to the second part. Indeed the first part might well be dubbed the *raison d'être* of the *bons conseils* of the second part, or, to put it briefly, we might consider Part I the poison, and Part II the antidote. The ingenuity of Rousseau's aphorism, whatever one's opinion of his novel, is none the less eminently characteristic.

The final passage from the interview, describing their visit to the church of Montmorency is perhaps the most important of all. The evident friendliness of the relations

between Rousseau and the officiating clergy, who were catholics, is in itself sufficiently interesting. What the Great Man had to say of the Gospels, however, deserves a more detailed examination.

"When I read it," he said, "I believe 'tout ce qu'elle débite, tant je suis touché de sa simplicité,' but as soon as I consult my reason, I begin to doubt and find inconsistencies. 'Bienheureux celui qui n'y en trouve pas.'"

Nothing, it seems to me could emphasize more pointedly than do these words, the inherent duality of Rousseau's nature. The conflict between the head and the heart from which, by his own admission, he suffered all his life,²¹ is here found in its most acute form. The situation is more poignant than usual, for we know that Rousseau was, as a rule, able to force his intellect to serve up paradoxes in support of his emotions. The problem of the truth of the Gospels, however, was not so easy of solution. The conventional source of information for his attitude in this matter, the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar*, pictures the struggle at great length. His final position, as summed up there, is described as one of 'involuntary skepticism,' based on 'humility.'²² Rousseau's words as recorded by Weisse tally therefore, surprisingly well with what he had already written in the Fourth Book of the *Emile*. His heart is 'touched' by the 'simplicity' of the Gospels, but as soon as he consults his reason, he doubts and finds 'inconsistencies.' The last sentence, in my opinion, sums up his conclusions with even greater frankness than does the *Profession of Faith*. The position of 'involuntary skepticism' appears here in the stronger guise of 'regretful skepticism.' A clearer statement of the relations between Rousseau's intellect and his emotions could scarcely be found. The question of the truth of the Gospels brought the conflict between his head and his heart to the supreme test of strength; the struggle was long

²¹ *Confessions*, VIII, 79.

²² *Emile*, ed. Hachette, II, 281.

and bitter, and in the end, as this quotation from Weisse shows, his heart won but a Pyrrhic victory.

At the same time, painful as his condition was, Rousseau contrived to extract some comfort from it. To the eighteenth century mind the position of regretful skepticism was a paradox of incredible complexity. It was equally shocking to believer and atheist, and it is hard to say which party was the more deeply offended by it, the clergy or the *Philosophes*. To Rousseau, as we know, the publication of the *Profession of the Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* brought a startling notoriety, a notoriety which, although it made him a man without a country, was at the same time extremely flattering to his pride. In the present instance the effect upon Weisse was equally satisfactory, for he set down the *sentence* with evident delight as a typical example of Rousseau's genius and *Sonderbarkeit*. How deep the impression was which the author of the *Confessions* made upon contemporaries, the account of this interview would substantiate. Of all the eminent men, whose acquaintance Weisse made (and they were many, including Lessing) Rousseau is the only one whose actual words he found worthy to remember and record. However one may feel toward him, the compliment to the *Citoyen de Genève* is unequivocal.

Brief as it is, it will be admitted, I think, that this little interview possesses a certain completeness. The eight distinct sections into which it may be divided, epitomize each in its way, one feature of Rousseau's variegated genius. In the majority of cases,—the curt dismissal of the elegant visitors, the expressed contempt for books, the reviling of conquerors, the diatribe against the *méchanceté* of men, the remarks anent the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, or the truth of the Gospels,—in all these instances the agreement with the published utterances of Rousseau is surprisingly close. The two quotations which are in seeming disaccord with his written word, may, as we have seen, be accounted for. The profession of distaste for the Montmorency gardens, or the cynical estimate of the *Devin du Village* appear cer-

tainly to contradict flatly the passages touching on those subjects in the *Confessions*. This conflict, however, is superficial. The opposing opinions, whether spoken (interview) or written (*Confessions*), spring obviously from one and the same source, the fondness of Rousseau for the paradox. The apparent inconsistency in these two cases vanishes as soon as we have recourse to the fundamental principle upon which the Great Obscurantist erected his amazing structure.

On the whole, therefore, Rousseau's books are well represented. In fact the *Contrat Social*, the *Lettre à d'Alembert*, and the first three books of the *Emile* present the only subjects upon which the capricious celebrity did not express himself to Weisse, either directly or *à rebours*. Thus the range of topics upon which Weisse drew from Rousseau a characteristic *sentence*, is pretty wide. We should be grateful that the visitor got as much as he did, for his account, though brief, gives us an unbiased glimpse of Rousseau's behaviour when 'on parade.' How consistent with his written word this behaviour was, is here amusingly corroborated. Indeed the little interview presents, all things considered, an excellent portrait *en miniature* of that bizarre and baffling genius who 'preferred paradoxes to prejudices.'

FRANCIS A. WATERHOUSE